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St. Paul Avenue Vertical Lift Bridge Rehabilitation Fact Sheet

The rehabilitation of the St. Paul Avenue Vertical Lift Bridge over the Milwaukee River began on Tuesday, September 3, 2013. The bridge was closed to vehicular and pedestrian traffic from North Plankinton to North Water Street, but remained open to river navigational traffic. The project was scheduled to be completed by June 2014, and the bridge will open to traffic on June 11, 2014. The Department of Public Works coordinated an accelerated construction schedule with the design firm and contractors to help minimize conflicts with the I-794/Hoan Bridge construction project, and to avoid major traffic congestion for summer festivals at Maier Festival Park.

The St. Paul Avenue bridge was originally built in 1966 and was Milwaukee's first vertical lift bridge. After 47 years the structural, mechanical, hydraulics and electrical components of the structure needed major upgrades. The rehabilitation process included:

- Replacement of the steel lift span and open steel grating with a lightweight concrete deck for a better ride surface for motorists and cyclists
- Installing a new concrete deck at approach spans
- Sandblasting and painting steel members
- Hydraulic, mechanical and electrical upgrades
- New ability for the St. Paul Avenue bridge operator to remotely operate the Michigan Street bridge
- Concrete repairs of abutments and piers
- Architectural enhancements such as a new bridge house roof, pedestrian railings, and pier planters

The Department of Public Works Support for Business liaison worked closely with area businesses in the Historic Third Ward (HTW) before and during the project to help ensure that all stakeholders were kept informed of bridge rehabilitation activities. Support for Business also hosted a social media seminar for business owners to help them reach out to customers and prepare for construction. Detour signs were posted to alert the driving public to street closures and detours as they travelled to their destinations. "OPEN FOR BUSINESS" signage was strategically placed on both sides of the Milwaukee River to assure patrons and customers that the HTW was indeed open for business during the construction project. One westbound lane of Clybourn Street was re-designed as an eastbound lane from Plankinton to Water Street to help direct traffic around the closed stretch of St. Paul Avenue, allowing motorists to access HTW businesses and venues.

The design for the St Paul Avenue bridge was completed by Bloom Companies LLC of Milwaukee, and the construction was performed by Zenith Tech, Inc. of Waukesha, WI. The project was fully funded with City of Milwaukee capital funds. Total cost of this project is approximately \$9 million.

